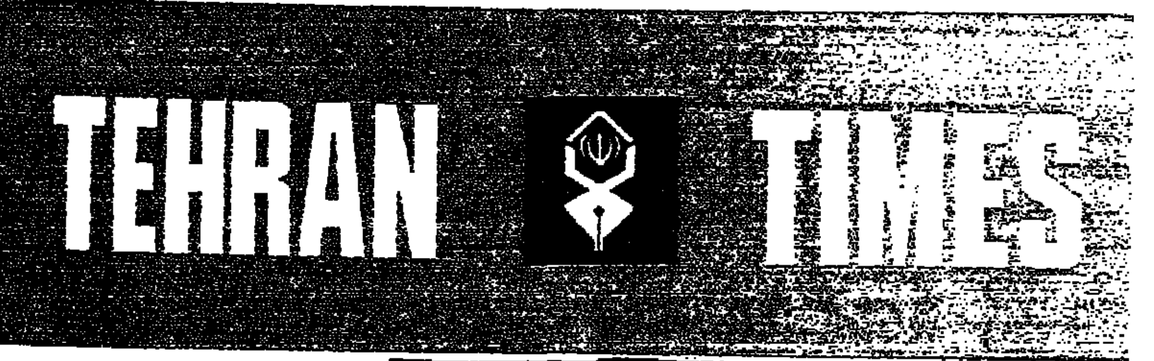
JUNE 8, 1997

China Cautions Japan Over Alliance With U.S.

BEIJING — China on Tuesday warned Tokyo to act carefully to avoid destabilizing the Asia-Pacific region with moves to boost its military profile and strengthen a security alliance between Japan and the United States.

Washington and Tokyo at the weekend unveiled new plans to revamp their strategic relationship and widen potential military cooperation — always a highly sensitive issue for China, which suffered hugely from Japanese aggression in the 1930s and 40s.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



16 PAGES, PRICE 200 RIALS

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Turkey to Set Up "Security Zone" in Northern Iraq

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey — Turkey plans to set up a "security zone" in northern Iraq where it has been hunting down Kurdish separatists in a nearly month-old operation, a military source said Tuesday.

"The army will not pull out before creating a security zone in the north of Iraq to prevent the return of terrorists in the region, from which they will have been dislodged," the source in southeastern Turkey told AFP on condition of anonymity.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Boroujerdi Submits Message to Demirel



BOROUJERDI



DEMIREL

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs, Alauddin Boroujerdi, arrived in Ankara on Monday. Yesterday, he submitted a message from President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to the Turkish President, Suleyman Demirel.

Meanwhile on Tuesday, Boroujerdi discussed recent developments in northern Iraq, Tehran-Ankara security cooperation as well as bilateral relations with his Turkish counterpart, Kurkmaz Haktanir.

Informing the Turkish official of Iran's emphasis on the need for easing the tension in the region, Boroujerdi underlined that more efforts should be made at further development of the region.

He said that calm and peaceful climate is one of the main factors in regional development and stressed that the speedy withdrawal of the Turkish troops from northern Iraq should be considered as an urgent move.

Boroujerdi further noted that Iran is serious in maintaining the security of its borders and confronting the infiltration of the

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Rafsanjani Commissions Key Projects in Hormuzgan



BANDAR ABBAS — Several key development projects in this southern province including the Persian Gulf Shipyard and Al-Mahdi Aluminum Complex were commissioned by President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Monday night and Tuesday morning.

The outgoing president arrived here last night to inaugurate several giant projects.

Tuesday morning he inaugurated the Persian Gulf Shipyard, 37 kms west of here. The facility is built on a 1100 hectares of land at a cost of $550 million and Rls 200 billion.

With the commissioning of the plant, one of the most advanced, the Islamic Republic has entered a new stage in shipbuilding industry.

The shipyard can build four 27,000-ton ships and repair 230 ships with capacity of 35,000 to 70,000 tons. It creates 8,000 job opportunities.

The shipyard has seven lines for building and repairing various vessels, a 27,000-ton lift-truck system and a 28,000-ton pool to accommodate ships with capacity up to 70,000 tons.

It also has two breakwaters as well as discharge, loading and repair jetties.

A 40-hectar industrial area has also been designed in the shipyard which will be ceded to the private sector to offer services.

The shipyard has concluded agreements on building six 22,000 cargo ships with Iran's shipping organization, affiliated to the Commerce Ministry. The first ship is to be delivered in 1999.

The Persian Gulf shipyard is affiliated to the Organization for Development and Modernization of Iran's industries.

The president also inspected the ongoing work at oil pumping installations at 'Bahregansar' and 'Soroush' oil fields in the Persian Gulf Tuesday morning.

The project for rehabilitation and modernization of 'Bahregan Sar' and 'Hendijan' oil fields are estimated to cost $63.157 million and Rls 66.666 billion.

So far, Rls 256.141 billion has been spent on the project, expected to be completed in 1998.

The production capacity of the oil fields, among the oldest in the Persian Gulf, will increase from 20,000 barrels a day to 60,000 barrels.

Meanwhile, Rafsanjani inspected the project for develop-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Anti-Taleban Alliance Denies Taleban Victory Claim

KABUL — The Taleban militia have gained some ground in fighting north of Kabul but are yet to capture the key highway town of Jabul Siraj, opposition claimed Tuesday.

"Jabul Siraj is still under our control," anti-Taleban commander Ahmad Shah Masood's spokesman Abdullah told AFP by satellite telephone.

Abdullah, however, conceded the loss of the 2nd division army base which sits on high ground overlooking Jabul Siraj, a much contested strategic center 77 kilometers (48 miles) north of Kabul.

He said the Taleban had launched an attack Monday from

(Contd on Pg. 14)

U.S. Desires Influence in Middle East by Supporting Taleban

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Following is Part I of an interview with Hamid Mowlana, Director of International Communications Division at the School of International Affairs at American University, Washington D.C., regarding Afghanistan, U.S.-Iran relations, and U.S. accusations of Iran.

In Afghanistan, where all rival factions claim to be Islamic, the Taleban has been used by the United States, either directly or indirectly, to make sure that in the process of political development in the region, the U.S. can exert some influence, Professor Hamid Mowlana told the *Tehran Times.*

The U.S. is very interested in having influence in the region, not only in Afghanistan, but also in Central Asia, said Mowlana,



MOWLANA

But the Taleban have problems: the infighting is sectarian and is not over, he said. Pakistan, the United States and other countries outside the region are very interested in the region for either economic or strategic reasons; Pakistan is interested in making sure that it will have access to some of the resources available in Central Asia, especially oil, through Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the U.S. is very interested in assuring that the Iran-Afghanistan relationship will not be a very cordial one, Mowlana said.

Future alliance between Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and any other country in the region is very natural because they are all Islamic countries in a unique geographical position.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Netanyahu Rules Out Settlement Halt

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday he hoped Egypt could broker a resumption of peace talks with Palestinians.

But the prime minister rejected a key PLO demand for a freeze on Jewish settlement including the controversial Har Homa construction on occupied land on the outskirts of Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

"I am certainly willing to try all avenues even against some advice that I received," Netanyahu said of Egypt's mediation attempt. "There is hope, I hope that it succeeds," he told Reuters in a television interview.

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are due to meet in Israel on Thursday in an attempt to break a two-month-old deadlock caused by Netanyahu's decision to break ground at Har Homa, Jabal abu Ghneim in Arabic.

Both sides have played down expectations of a breakthrough but the United States and European Union are behind the Egyptian initiative.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat has been pressing for a three to six-month halt in settlement building to allow talks on a final resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict to restart.

Netanyahu ruled this out, dismissing settlement as a non-issue.

But he acknowledged that Israel would not be able to hold on to all

(Contd on Pg. 14)



Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO)

The first shipyard for manufacturing oceangoing ships was inaugurated in the Persian Gulf by the flagbearer of construction President Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Persian Gulf Shipbuilding Company

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In the Name of God

And Allah invites to the abode of peace and guides whom He pleases into the right path.

(HOLY QORAN) (10:25)

OPINION

Turkey's Security Zone in Northern Iraq

The ramifications of Turkey's incursion into northern Iraq are becoming more and more dangerous as there is no international body to check the blatant invasion of a UN member by another.

The Turkish army announced yesterday that it "will not pull out before creating a security zone in the north of Iraq."

In the first place the idea of setting up a security zone in another country reminds us of the security zone set up by Israel in South Lebanon. It is a clear breach of good neighborliness and violation of international law.

Aside from being illegal, the security zone set up by Israel has not helped the Zionist regime in achieving its objectives.

It will not help Ankara, either, to accomplish its goals in northern Iraq. Turkey should not put the horse behind the cart while dealing with the PKK. No one approves of separatism in Turkey. Kurdish separatism in Turkey is condemned in all its aspects. The Kurdish problem in Turkey should be addressed in a proper manner, to find a peaceful, rational solution to the crisis. It is not possible to eliminate or annihilate the Kurds from the face of Turkey. They are a reality which Ankara must humbly accept.

If the Kurds' economic and social problems are solved appropriately, if their grievances are addressed sympathetically, the Kurds themselves will be the first to resist separation from Turkey. Instead of spending millions of dollars in exterminating the Kurds, Ankara must develop Kurdish areas, providing the Kurds with better education and hygiene to improve the condition of their lives.

Israel, the U.S. and certain Western countries are the ones encouraging Kurdish separatism in order to achieve their goals in the region. Wherever they live, the Kurds must bear in mind that the creation of a Kurdistan will not serve them under any circumstances. It is not in their interest to play into the hands of the U.S. and other countries with vested interests in this sensitive region.

Ankara should prepare the grounds for the Kurds to feel a sense of belonging in their country. They should not be treated as second-rate citizens. On their part, the Kurds must stop playing into the hands of foreign powers with vested interests.

IRNA Chief Calls On ACSNA Members to Fulfill Objectives

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Head of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) Fereidoun Verdinejad, urged the members of the Association of Caspian Sea News Agencies (ACSNA) to make greater efforts to materialize the goals and aspiration of the association.

Addressing the inaugural session of the technical experts meeting of ACSNA in Ashkhabad Tuesday, he added that determination of the news agencies of five Caspian Sea littoral states in forming ACSNA is a proof to their professional maturity and endeavor to undertake journalistic responsibilites in the present era.

He also underlined the need to employ modern communication know-how in order to facilitate circulation of news and information among ACSNA member news agencies, IRNA reported.

Formation of such a news network demands constructive and all-out cooperation, Verdinejad, who is also chairman of ACSNA, told the session.

The two-day meeting is aimed at reviewing the technical structure for circulation of news among ACSNA member countries, the managing director of the Islamic Republic News Agency concluded.

Velayati Calls His Ukraine Visit Constructive

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on Tuesday described his two-day visit to Ukraine as constructive, saying that the prospects for promotion of Tehran-Kiev relations is promising.

According to IRNA, the foreign minister made the remark on Tuesday while speaking to reporters before leaving Kiev for Bishkek, the capital city of Kyrgyzstan.

He added that Tehran-Kiev cooperation is to the interest of both countries on the grounds that it enables them to meet each other's technological and energy needs.

Tehran-Kiev trade is not limited to exchange of goods, Velayati said, adding that technical know-how is also exchanged between the two countries.

On joint aircraft manufacturing project, he said the agreement has been signed to expand Iran's aircraft industries under which 200 Antonov-14 passenger planes will be built.

The agreement stipulates full transfer of technology from Ukraine to Iran. A number of Iranian engineers are currently being trained in Ukraine, he said.

On trilateral cooperation among regional countries, he referred to ties between Iran, Ukraine and Turkmenistan as the first experience. At present the volume of trade among the three countries has reached $50 million and during the current trip, suggestions were made to boost it to $70 million, he added.

Tehran welcomes Ukraine's proposal on trilateral cooperation between Iran, Ukraine and Azerbaijan Republic and even considers it to the interest of regional stability, security and economic development, concluded Velayati.

On Monday, Velayati and his Ukrainian counterpart Gennady Udovenko signed a letter of understanding on promotion of bilateral and trilateral economic cooperation.

The two sides expressed hope that Tehran-Kiev Joint Economic Commission will meet in Kiev by



the end of 1997.

In order to further promote bilateral economic relations, in the area of energy and oil in particular, the Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh will visit Ukraine in the near future.

Tehran and Kiev voiced readiness to hold a trilateral meeting of Iran, Ukraine and Turkmenistan in Tehran in the near future.

Kazakh Minister Denies Selling C-300 Weapons to Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The false reports on sale of C-300 anti-aircraft weapons to Iran are baseless on the grounds that Kazakhstan does not produce such weapons, Kazakh Defense Minister Altyn Bayev said.

General Bayev in an interview with IRNA which was also aired by the state-run TV, said in Almaty on Monday that the Russian-made C-300 weapon system is very rare and expensive. Russia produces these weapons at a limited number and sells them to China for $300 to 400 million each.

General Bayev added that Kazakhstan has only one C-300 anti-aircraft weapon, left from the time of the Soviet rule.

Iran Hosts World's Largest Number of Refugees



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Head of the Interior Ministry's Organization for Expatriates and Refugees Affairs, Ahmad Hosseini, said here Tuesday that the Islamic Republic of Iran bosting over 2,026,000 refugees, has received the highest number of refugees in the world.

Speaking to reporters, Hosseini added that 1.4 million of the refugees residing in Iran are Afghan nationals, 576,000 are Iraqis and 36,000 others are migrants from Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The Interior Ministry official underlined that Islamic Republic's policy regarding the refugees affairs is to facilitate refugees repatriation to their homeland, he said.

He added that 1.378 million Afghan refugees have so far returned to their country voluntarily after the withdrawal of the former Soviet Union troops from Afghanistan, he added.

For the time being, as a result of intensification of the crisis in Afghanistan, the voluntary return of 250,000 Afghan refugees to the northern region of the war-torn country has been postponed.

As for voluntary return of 10,000 Kurdish Iraqi refugees to northern Iraq, he stressed that since Iraqi Kurds comprise 50% of that country's refugees residing in Iran and that Saddam's forces are not present in northern Iraq, there would be no problem for return of Iraqi Kurds if they want.

He said the total assistance of international organizations and private charity institutes to refugees in Iran was $43 million in 1997 which is very slight compared to the costs of managing over two million foreign refugees.

Hosseini said according to the Geneva Convention of 1951, three ways are envisaged concerning the fate of foreign refugees; repatriation, integration into the country where the refugees are living and settlement of refugees and migrants in a third country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has entered into negotiations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other countries to help refugees move to other countries, he added.

Asked about the damage inflicted on Iran directly or indirectly as a result of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait which was followed by influx of displaced population, he said Iran has referred the case to a special UN commission and sought compensation from the sale of unauthorized Iraqi oil.

He said preliminary negotiations were also held with the UN officials to establish the UNHCR Regional Office in Tehran.

Oil Companies Invited to Cooperate With Iran in Pipeline Projects

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Deputy Oil Minister, Hojjatollah Ghanimifard, invited international oil companies to cooperate with Iran in construction of oil and gas pipelines in Central Asian and Caucasian countries.

Speaking at the Asia Oil and Gas Conference in the Malaysian capital on Monday, Ghanimifard added that in the light of importance of oil and gas industry Iran has started cooperation with Central Asian and Caucasian countries, Asia's main suppliers of oil and gas in future.

He also said that the Middle Eastern countries, Iran in particular, will be the major sources of oil and gas in future.

Habibi Felicitates Georgian, Portuguese Officials

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's First Vice President Hassan Habibi sent separate messages on Tuesday to the Georgian deputy prime minister and Portuguese prime minister congratulating the national days of Georgia and Portugal.

In his message to the Georgian Deputy Prime Minister Nikoloz Lekishvili, Habibi congratulated him, his government and the Georgian nation on the National Day of Georgia.

The message read that Georgia's independence has served to deepen old relations and friendly bonds between the two nations and exchange of visits by Iranian and Georgian officials has resulted in further expansion of mutual ties.

Habibi also expressed hope that amicable relations between the two countries would further broaden in the future.

In another message of congratulation to Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Guterres, the first vice president felicitated Portugal's Independence Day.

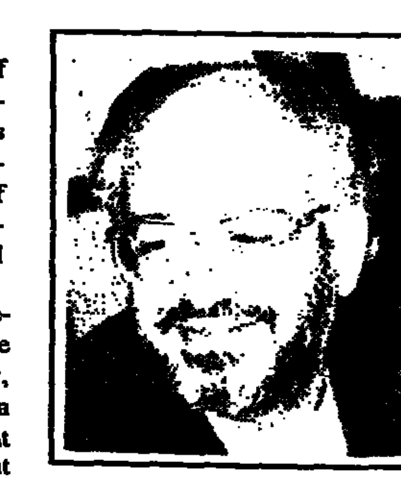
Nematzadeh: Iran to Export 2m Tons of Cement

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Minister of Industries Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh said in Bandar Abbas on Tuesday that following the increase in production capacity of Iranian cement factories, two million tons of cement are expected to be exported this year.

Speaking in the opening ceremony of the first production line of Hormuzgan Cement Factory, the minister said that Hormuzgan Cement Factory is the 10th plant of this kind set up during the eight years of construction. He also expressed hope that the number of cement factory would reach 16 by the end of the construction period.

He added that Hamedan Cement Factory with a capacity of



2,300 tons per day will go on stream next month and the cement plants of Ilam, Estahban, Shahroud, Ramsar and Khuzestan will become operational by the year end.

Yugoslav Minister Holds Talks With Iranian Officials

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Foreign Trade Minister of Yugoslavia Borislav Vukovic called on First Vice President Hassan Habibi and Commerce Minister Yahya Al-e-Eshaq here on Monday.

According to IRNA, in his meeting with Habibi, Vukovic termed his meetings with Iranian officials very fruitful.

He said the private sectors in both Iran and Yugoslavia are interested to cooperate with each other in the area of industries, trade and economy which, he said, offers a good starting point for Iran and Yugoslavia to cooperate in those areas.

The first vice president of Iran said that peace would return to the Balkans only as the result of cooperation and good will of all sides as well as recognition of and respect to the rights of all nations.

Habibi said that Iran, China and a number of Non-Aligned countries maintain that a unipolar world system would be against the development of Third World nations. He added that cooperation between Asia and Africa would prevent the creation of a unipolar world system.

In another meeting on Monday with Iranian Commerce Minister Yahya Al-e Eshaq, Vukovic said that his country is willing to enhance the level of trade exchange with Iran and take part in joint

(Contd on Pg: 14)

هكذا من الأصل

ISESCO Organizes Seminar in Tehran on University-Industry Interaction

RABAT — The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) is organizing in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran a national seminar on "university-industry interaction".

The seminar is being held on 10-14 June, 1997 in Tehran, and is being attended by scientists and technologists from universities and other research institutions, and representatives of industry from the Islamic Republic of Iran, it was announced here on Tuesday by ISESCO.

The seminar will enable representatives of industry to learn about the research work being conducted by universities in order that industry may benefit from these findings and may also support research work suited to the needs of the country.

The seminar is being organized by ISESCO with the collaboration of the bureau of international and scientific cooperation, Ministry of Education.

Dr. Taher Ghasemi Honary, programmes specialist, ISESCO science directorate is representing ISESCO at this seminar.

The above seminar is being held by ISESCO under its programme directed towards promotion of effective linkages between universities and other research institutions, on the one hand, and industry, on the other, to improve transfer of research findings to the production sectors in ISESCO member states. *(IRNA)*

President Rafsanjani Arrives in Qeshm

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani arrived in Qeshm yesterday in continuation of his tour of Hormozgan Province and was welcomed by local officials.

President Rafsanjani will inaugurate a number of development projects in Qeshm and inspect some projects under construction.

The president is accompanied by a number of ministers and the province's officials.

ECO 2nd Railway Meeting Starts Work



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) second meeting of the senior railway officials opened here yesterday.

The three day meeting aims at acquaintance with ECO member's capabilities and resources, absorption of financial support of international organizations for investment in prominent projects as well as expansion of the information transmission system and telecommunication network.

Addressing the meeting was the Managing Director of the Railway of the Islamic Republic of Iran Sadeq Afshar who presented an account of the present situation of the railway in Iran and the projects under construction.

He said the total track kilometer of the Islamic Republic of Iran consists of 7740kms with standard gauge of 1435mm of which 6134kms is mainline and 1120km is subline, industrial and maneuvering lines.

Afshar added that 1700kms of the mainline was put into operation after the glorious Islamic Revolution in Iran.

He said the main lines are linked to the European railway network via Turkey, to Nakhjavan in the northwest through Julfa, to Caspean Sea in the north through the ports of Turkmen and Amirabad and to Persian Gulf through Bandar Khorramshahr, Bandar Imam Khomeini and Bandar Abbas in the south.

He added that Trans-Iranian railway was linked to Turkmenistan in the northeast of Iran at Sarakhs border station on May 12, 1996 and provided an international linkage of the Central Asian states, China, Federation of Russia and northeast of ESCAP region as well.

Afshar said the Iranian Islamic Republic Railway last year had a fleet of 566 units locomotives, 15851 units freight wagons and 1066 unit passenger coaches carrying 9.7 million passengers and 22.5 million tons of cargo.

He added that the Iranian Islamic Republic Railway intends to purchase 500 units passenger coaches, 60 units trainsets for movement of the trainees at 180km high speed, 300 locomotives and 10,000 new freight wagons in the next five years. Of this figure 1500 units will be delivered by Wagon Pars Company.

Another speaker was the ECO Secretary General Onder Ozar who said it is high time for the ECO countries to mobilize their resources and energy in completing at the earliest various projects and programs which are at different stage of implementation within the framework of Almaty outline Plan. Most of these projects and programs, once completed, would facilitate transportation and transit of goods and passengers and help in the development of new and modern transport infrastructure.

Onder Ozar said what is crucial in this exercise is the need to follow a truly professional approach in our projects by determining their techno-economic modalities and to inculcate a regional attitude and cooperative spirit in our transport-related national policies and plans.

Iran to Replace Old Tanker Fleet, Buys From Daewoo

DUBAI - Iran's state-owned National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) is moving quickly to buy new oil tankers to replace its ageing fleet, Iranian and gulf shipping sources said on Tuesday, Reuter reported.

NITC has awarded a contract to South Korea's Daewoo heavy industries for five 158,000-tonne Suezmax type oil tankers and will award a contract for five more 100,000-tonne Aframax tankers in the next two months, they said.

"The first Suezmax cargo will arrive within 27 months and each of the other four will be delivered every 45 days after that," NITC Chairman Mohammad Souri told Reuters.

A contract for Aframax tankers — which will be mainly used to supply Iranian crude to the country's new refinery at Bandar Abbas — was planned to be awarded within two months, he added.

NITC aims to buy five oil product carriers and five very large crude carriers (VLCC) after the Aframax purchases.

A Daewoo spokesman in Seoul on Tuesday said its Suezmax contract, which will take oil produced by the National Iranian Oil Co (NIOC) to Mediterranean markets, was worth $300 million.

Souri estimated that each of the Aframax cargoes would be worth around $40 million.

NITC has secured new tankers to replace its fleet much of which pre-dated the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution. NITC has scrapped 15 of its tankers in recent years, reducing its own fleet to 11 crude tankers and nine product tankers.

This has frequently forced NITC to spend scarce hard currency to time-charter vessels from the international spot market to transport oil to Iran's main export markets in Asia, Europe and the America, shipping sources said.

"Their fleet was simply rusting or becoming dangerous...they suffered from breakdowns and high costs so the time came when they simply had to buy new," said a gulf shipping source.

NITC, a wholly owned subsidiary of NIOC, is responsible for exporting some 950,000 barrels per day (BPD) of Iran's 2.6 million BPD crude exports on a "delivered" or charge, insurance and freight (CIF) basis.

It also time charters its own VLCCs in the spot market.

Iran is the world's third largest oil exporter behind Saudi Arabia and Norway and is heavily reliant on the $18 billion a year that oil revenues brings to the country.

Daewoo supplied NITC with five 300,000-tonne VLCCs in 1996. *(Reuter)*

President-Elect Khatami Thanks Leaders Congratulating His Victory

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President-elect Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Khatami sends separate messages to leaders of Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia, France, Afghanistan, Greece, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Mali, Romania and the prime ministers of Italy, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Afghanistan and United Arab Emirates appreciating them for congratulating Khatami on his election as president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In his message Khatami expressed hope that with mutual joint efforts all-out relations are established between Iran and other countries, securing mutual interests in all political, economic and cultural areas.

"Husseiniyeh Jamaran" Declared National Heritage

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Institute for Compilation and Dissemination of the Works of Imam Khomeini (RA) announced that the National Heritage Organization registered "Husseiniyeh Jamaran" as a national heritage.

"Husseiniyeh Jamaran" was endowed by Ayatollah Ebrahim Jamarani in 1896 and the late Imam Khomeini chose the house adjacent to Husseiniyeh Jamaran as his residence.

Fifth Int'l Exhibition of Decorative Stones Opens

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The fifth international exhibition of decorative stones opened at the permanent Tehran International Fairground attended by a number of foreign and domestic manufacturing and industrial companies, both private and government.

The participants at the five day exhibition will put on display their latest products such as mineral machinery, mineral stones, decorative stones, stone-cutting tool, etc.

Turkey's Islamic Government Bars Officials From Military Meeting

ANKARA, Turkey — In a slap at the military, the Islamic-led government barred judges and prosecutors from attending a briefing called by top generals about Islamic radicalism, newspapers reported Tuesday.

The generals issued invitations over the weekend to prosecutors, judges, academicians, businessmen, diplomats and journalists to attend a series of briefings on threats from Islam starting Tuesday.

It was the first time the military held such briefings on the issue.

Justice Minister Sevket Kazan on Monday barred participation by the judiciary officials, the *Milliyet* daily reported. Kazan said those who disobey would be placed under investigation.

Officials at the Justice Ministry did not immediately return phone calls Tuesday. *(AP)*

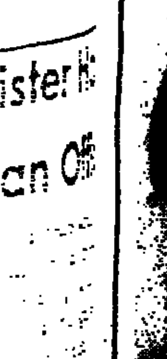
President to Inaugurate Construction of Mamlou Dam Soon

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will soon inaugurate the construction operation of Mamlou Dam over Jajrood River in Tehran Province.

Mamlou dam is located at a place known as "Darvazeh" down the Latian Dam and 2.5 kilometers from the connecting point of Damavand river and Jajrood.

This important project aims to supply the water required by the region's industry, agriculture and drinking needs.







COLOGNE, Germany: (June 9) Combo of police handouts showing 24-year-old Nosrath A. (L) and 25-year-old Ismail B. (R) who were arrested by German authorities after the hijackers had seized a Maltese plane carrying about 80 people and forced it to land at Cologne-Bonn airport. *(AFP PHOTO)*

18 Killed by Militants in Northeast India

CALCUTTA — At least 18 people were killed in an ambush by tribal militants in India's remote northeastern state of Tripura early on Tuesday, police said.

Police in Agartala, state capital of Tripura, told Reuters by telephone that they suspected the National Liberation Front of Tripura, a separatist guerrilla group, was responsible for the attack.

The incident took place at Chamanu in Dhalai district, some 180 km (120 miles) north of Agartala.

The victims were travelling in two vehicles when the militants opened fire from a hill-top, killing most of them on the spot, the police said.

Police said 15 of the deceased belonged to the paramilitary General Reserve Engineering Force while three were casual laborers. They said several people were wounded in the ambush. *(Reuter)*

WEATHER

The Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization announced today's weather as follows:

Forecast for Tehran: Max. temp. 36°C, Min. temp. 24°C

Partly cloudy with dust and wind and scattered showers

Warmest Point:
Abadan & dezful 46°C

Coldest Point:
Sarab 8°C

Some cities of the world

Cities	Max. °C	Cities	Max. °C
Riyadh	—	Vienna	—
Istanbul	—	Moscow	26
Rome	—	Madrid	—
Athens	—	Abu Dhabi	39
London	25	Karachi	32
Paris	28	New Delhi	35
Frankfurt	—	Kuwait	—

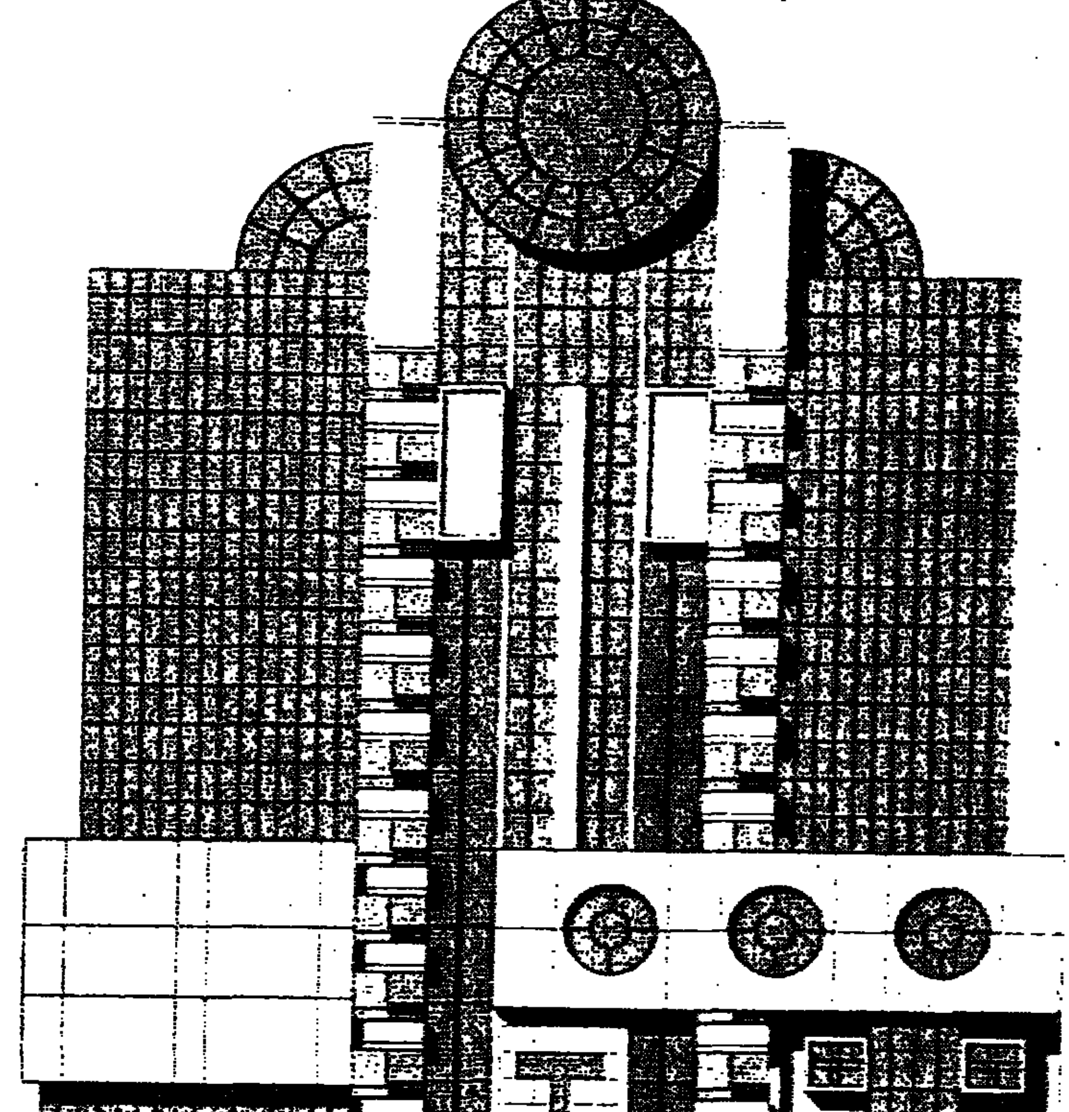
TEHRAN TRADE TOWER

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Engineer Mehrdad Khalili Fard

Executor:
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Structural Engineer:
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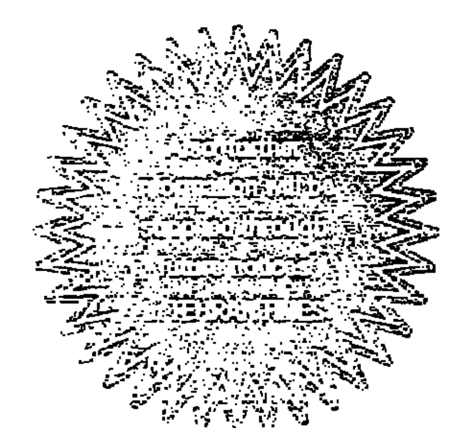
Dr. Matin's (Azhand Khak) Lab



NOTE: BLUE GLASS HAS BEEN USED IN TOWER

Please note that each unit of the tower will be allocated to a predetermined profession so that the whole complex can act as an active unit while business activities are performed outdoors.

A pre-recorded message on our phones will be giving you more information.



- ✓ 26 stories each with 3200 sq.m of built-up area
- ✓ Offering the highest standards for international trade
- ✓ Supermodern design and structure
- ✓ 2,000 commercial units with a space range of 10 to 100 sq.m for interrelated professions
- ✓ 200 commercial offices with dimensions of 50-100 sq.m
- ✓ 200 convenience facilities
- ✓ Easy access through Tehran highways
- ✓ A 6-m-wide access to every story with a slight steep
- ✓ Escalators, conveyor belts, elevators for goods and vehicles and a number of elevators for passengers
- ✓ 16,000 sq.m of multistory parking lots beneath the tower
- ✓ Storage facilities in base floors, Tehran suburbs and Bandar Abbas
- ✓ Close to Tehran's grand bazaar and the city's main entrances





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JUNE 11, 1997

Modern
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Structural
Engineer:
Mr. Jalal
Sajjadian

Dr. Malin's
(Azhand Khak)
Lab

SPORTS

Manchester United After Laudrup, Babbel

LONDON — Manchester United are poised to bolster their squad with the signings of Brian Laudrup from Glasgow Rangers and Markus Babbel from Bayern Munich, it was reported here recently.

United manager Alex Ferguson has offered five million pounds (around $7.5 million) each for Danish forward Laudrup and German defender Babbel, according to the Sunday Times.

"Laudrup is marvellous at beating men and achieving real penetration in wide positions or through the middle," Ferguson told the paper.

"He is a quality player and we are delighted that he has made it clear he wants to come to us in spite of the competition from such big clubs as Ajax and Arsenal."

The news will come as a surprise to Morten Olsen, the coach of Ajax, who is understood to want to unite Laudrup with his brother Michael — currently playing in Japan — at the Dutch Giants.

Rangers appear resigned to losing their Danish star, who won Scotland's footballer of the year award twice in his three seasons at the glasgow club.

"We made him the biggest offer in our history," said Rangers secretary Campbell Ogilvie. "He has made it clear, though, that money has got nothing to do with it."

Ferguson is convinced that the 28-year-old dane wants to join the English champions because he has a better chance of winning European honors.

"Brian has one year left to run on his contract with Rangers and at 28 he knows that with the strength we already have on our staff the biggest prizes could be within his reach at Manchester United," added Ferguson.

Of 24-year-old Babbel, Ferguson said: "He is tall, strong and young and would substantially strengthen our defense.

"Babbel has shown with Bayern that he is a particularly good marker and he has that excellent German attitude to the game - organized, committed and disciplined.

"As with Laudrup we think a lot of him and that is why we are prepared to pay five million pounds apiece for them." (AFP)



PARIS, France (June 9): Brazilian soccer player Ronaldo prepares to shoot a free kick in the Parc des Princes in Paris as 8 boys, with T-shirts marked with the number of days left until the 1998 soccer World Cup, stand to defend the goal kept by Michel Platini, the co-president of the French 98 World Cup committee.

(AFP PHOTO)

A $26m Contract Over Ronaldo

MILAN — Inter Milan president Massimo Moratti warned Barcelona on Tuesday that he could use the civil courts to force them to release Brazilian striking ace Ronaldo from his contract.

Inter struck a deal with Ronaldo's agents last week, agreeing to pay a reported $26 million fee stipulated in a buy-out clause in his contract with the Catalan club.

Barcelona, however, have since claimed that the buy-out clause was only valid for moves within Spain, and could not be extended to other countries.

This would enable Barcelona to either keep the 20-year-old goal-scoring phenomenon — or negotiate an even higher price for him from Inter.

Moratti, though, said it was unlikely he would be meeting with Barcelona president Josep Nunez in the near future.

"I'm willing to meet and talk with anyone," he said. "But if the aim of the meeting was to ask for more money there would be no point. A year ago, Barcelona paid 30 billion lira for him — now he costs 45 billion.

"I'd say that's something to be happy about."

Inter's lawyers are currently poring over the details of Ronaldo's contract in their bid to prove that the buy-out clause is a general one and not confined to Spain.

After earlier seeming to rule out any civil action against Barcelona, Moratti told the Gazetta Dello Sport: "In life, you can never say 'never'. "We don't want things to come to that, it's not something we would want to do voluntarily. To begin, we would examine the possibilities with the (Italian Football) Federation, then we'd have to see."

But the Italian oil baron added: "Ronaldo mustn't let himself get distracted by all this. He should just stay calm and if his wish is to come to Inter, then he'll come." (AFP)

BASEBALL:

Irabu Set for U.S. Debut

TAMPA, Florida — Japanese pitcher Hideki Irabu makes his long-awaited U.S. debut here today with a New York Yankees' minor-league development team.

Irabu is expected to spend about one month training with younger players before joining the world series champions early next month.

The right-handed hurler signed a four-year, $12.8 million contract with the Yankees last month, ending more than six months of controversy on where or if he would even pitch this season.

Irabu made an impressive intra-squad debut here Friday after his debut was pushed back three days. Irabu struck out six of 12 batters he faced, allowing only one hit. Only three balls were knocked past the infield.

Irabu threw 31 strikes in 35 pitches over four innings, making about one-third of the pitches he can expect when hurling for Tampa against port st. Lucie in a Florida state league game today.



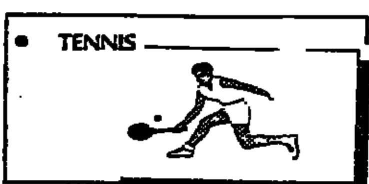
PARIS, France (June 9): Fernand Sastre, the co-president of the French 1998 World Cup committee presents the FIFA World Cup a year and a day before the start of the World Cup 98 competition in Paris.

(AFP PHOTO)

SPORT SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

• SOCCER



Pele's Cash Advice

KUALA LUMPUR — Pelé has urged footballers to give priority to developing their careers and not just chase after money.

"The players today keep on moving from one club to another to get more money instead of staying longer in one club," he said.

His words could be taken as a warning to compatriot Ronaldo, who is involved in a $60 million tug-of-war between Barcelona and inter Milan.

Platt Ponders Japan Move

LONDON: Former England captain David Platt confirmed he is considering a move to the J-league.

"It is true that I have received a couple of offers from Japan, but press reports which say that negotiations are at an advanced stage, are a bit optimistic," said the Arsenal midfielder, who was 31 on Tuesday.

Platt has two years left on his contract at arsenal but niggling injuries have limited his appearances following his return from a highly successful four-year spell in Italy with Juventus, Sampdoria and Bari.

Platt has not played for England since euro 96 and it is understood he would be happy for a fresh start at a new club.

On Wednesday it was reported in Japan that platt may join struggling J-league club Urawa Red Diamonds.

Juventus Stay at Home

Reggio Emilia: Italian champions Juventus are likely to stay in Turin next season, after being tempted to move away from their home city and its expensive Delle Alpi stadium.

the club's managing director Antonio Giraudo said they planned to stay, and would announce the final decision within 10 days.

But he once again slammed the "unacceptable" costs of the Delle Alpi stadium, a 125-million-dollar council-owned white elephant built for the 1990 world cup finals.

The club want to buy their old Comunale stadium from the council and re-develop the site.

The threat had been to move to Reggiana's new, more manageable ground at Reggio Emilia.

• RALLY

Makinen Stays at the Top

ATHENS — Finland's four-times world champion Juha Kankkunen remained at the head of the field after the second stage of the Acropolis Rally, seeing off a late surge by fellow Ford Escort driver Spain's Carlos Sainz.

• TENNIS

The Tim and Pete Show

LONDON: World number one Pete Sampras and Britain's Tim Henman successfully launched their doubles partnership at Queen's club here by beating Macedonia's Alexander Kitinov and Portugal's Nuno Marques 6-3, 6-4 in their first round clash.

• CYCLING

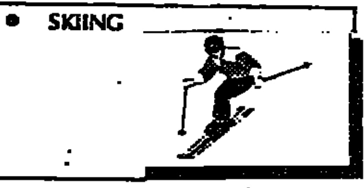


Abdujaporov Wins the Race

Villeurbanne: Djamolidine Abdujaporov won the first stage of the Criterium du Dauphine, a 167km stretch from Grenoble to Villeurbanne.

Britain's Chris Boardman, winner of Sunday's prologue, retained the leader's yellow jersey.

• SKIING



Tomba to Ski for Peace

SARAJEVO: Italian star Alberta Tomba arrived in Sarajevo to organize a slalom race for peace in December at one of the former winter olympic venues on the outskirts of the Bosnian capital.

The race was Tomba's own idea and it was seized upon by local sports officials hoping to reconstruct war-damaged winter sports venues in Sarajevo, which hosted the 1984 winter games.

• CRICKET

Hussain Warns: Don't Write Off Aussies

LONDON — England batting hero Nasser Hussain is sounding a note of caution amid the euphoria which has greeted Sunday's nine-wicket triumph over Australia in the first test at Edgbaston.

"We have won three games in a row now. We have a settled side, and everything is going in the right direction," said Hussain, whose brilliant 207 in England's first innings was his highest first class score.

"But this side we are playing against what is the best in the world and they will come back at us."

"The strength of our character will show not when everything is going for us but how we do when their class players come at us."



ARIEL, (June 9): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L), former Defense Minister Moshe Arens (C) and Ariel Mayor Ron Nachman each put a scoop of concrete during a cornerstone ceremony for the building of the Judea and Samaria College in the largest Jewish West Bank town Ariel. Before the start of the latest round of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, there has been speculations that Netanyahu has promised the Palestinians that Israel will suspend constructions of Jewish homes on occupied Arab land as a condition for continuing the peace process.

(AFP PHOTO)

UN Willing to Work Out Program for Caspian Sea

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Head of the United Nations Office in Tehran Micheal Schlemburg said on Monday that the United Nations was negotiating with the littoral states of the Caspian Sea with a view to cast a modern program for the sea.

According to IRNA, Schlemburg made the remark in a meeting in Rasht, Gilan Province, with the governor general of the province.

He said the United Nations recognizes Iran's special status in the region and believes that the Iranian government must play a significant role towards the fulfillment of that objective.

He said the United Nations would cooperate with Gilan Province of Iran for developing a compost mill and also in the area of fishery.

The UN official on Monday also visited the fishery facilities of Gilan Province and a compost mill in Seravan, near Rasht.

Efforts to Resume Peace Talks Still Clouded

JERICHO, West Bank — Renewed signs of Israel's determination to pursue Jewish settlement expansion in Arab areas cast a shadow Tuesday over efforts to renew Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said "There are still no plans" for a new meeting this week of Israeli and Palestinian officials who have been trying to agree on a resumption of negotiations frozen nearly three months ago.

Egyptian mediator Ossama el-Baz is scheduled to meet Thursday in Bait-ul-Moqaddas with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and in Gaza City with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to further the effort. he said.

Earlier reports said the Israelis and Palestinians would meet Thursday following an unsuccessful attempt to find a formula for resuming peace talks at a negotiating session Sunday in Cairo.

(AFP)

Tehran Review Iran-EU Relations

TEHRAN — The present state of relations between Islamic Iran and the European Union (EU) as well as future prospects were reviewed here yesterday.

The session, attended by members of the Majlis foreign policy commission, Deputy Foreign Minister for European Affairs and Iranian ambassadors to EU countries, stressed on safeguarding of the foreign policy principles of the Islamic Republic based on the dignity, philosophy and expediency of the Islamic system.

(IRNA)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

NETANYAHU...

the West Bank land that it captured in 1967. As part of a campaign to wean settlers and other right-wing nationalists off the dream of a greater Israel, officials leaked a map showing which parts of the West Bank would be ceded to Palestinians under a final settlement by 1999.

"We have to adjust our expectations to reality. I have put forward proposals both on how to enter accelerated negotiations for a final settlement and what the shape of that settlement could look like," Netanyahu said, insisting he was honoring the 1993 Oslo peace accord that he inherited from a center-left Labor government one year ago.

"You know the great work that I myself have done trying to achieve a consensus in the Israeli public which naturally means a really painful adjustment to reality," he said.

(Reuter)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

BOROUJERDI...

members of the Turkish opposition into its territory. This position, he added, will greatly help to solve Turkey's security problems.

"Good relationship between Tehran and Ankara is necessary for peace and stability in the region," the Iranian deputy foreign minister added.

The Turkish official, for his part, highlighted the importance of Iran-Turkey relations and said that security is of great importance for Turkey. "Maintaining Turkey's security is the main reason for the presence of the Turkish troops in northern Iraq, who aim to fight the Turkish armed insurgents," he stressed.

He hoped that the cooperation between the two countries can create a suitable atmosphere for boosting Tehran-Ankara relations.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

CHINA...

"We hope Japan can take lessons from history by acting cautiously and walking the road of peaceful development," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Cui Tiankai.

"The Japan-U.S. security alliance is a bilateral arrangement formed during the Cold War," Cui told a regular news briefing.

"With the end of the Cold War, there is no reason for this kind of arrangement to go beyond the scope of the two sides," he said, adding that limiting cooperation would prevent the introduction of instability to the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan's military intentions were always a matter of extreme sensitivity among its Asian neighbors, Cui said.

Tokyo has long been keen to soothe lingering Chinese suspicions that it is edging toward a revival of the kind of militarism that sent Japanese forces raging across much of the Asia-Pacific region in the 1930s.

Revised guidelines for military cooperation with the United States are expected to give Japan its highest military profile since defeat in World War II shattered Tokyo's imperial dream.

Emissaries sent by Japan to Beijing to explain the revised guidelines had promised that the general scope of the alliance with Washington would be unchanged and that the pacifist Japanese constitution would not be breached, Cui said.

Last week, defense policymakers from Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) briefed Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen on the U.S.-Japan defense plans.

(Reuter)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

TURKEY...

His use of the term "terrorists" referred to fighters of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which have been fighting since 1984 to create a Kurdish homeland in Turkey. More than 25,000 people have died since then.

The PKK uses northern Iraq as a rear base in attacking targets inside Turkish territory.

The source said the army would set up the buffer zone with an allied Iraqi Kurdish faction, the Kurdistan Democratic Party led by Masud Barzani.

"The army ... is currently carrying out research operations in the region and this takes a lot of time because of the region's geographical position," the source added, without giving details.

Meanwhile the Anatolia news agency, citing official sources, reported Tuesday that close to 3,580 Kurdish separatists had been killed by Turkish troops since the beginning of the year in Turkey and northern Iraq.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

U.S. ...

Mowlana was invited to participate at the International Congress on Imam Khomeini and the Revival of Religious Thought, recently held here to mark the eighth anniversary of the departure of the late Imam Khomeini.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

RAFSANJANI...

ment and modernization of Soroush oil field, 80 kms from the Kharg Island, which is to be implemented in two stages.

Later, the president inaugurated the first line of Hormuzgan Cement Factory which has a production capacity of 3,000 tons a day.

Construction of the factory, started in 1991, has cost Rls 250 billion and $110 million so far.

The second line of the project, completed by 89 percent, will produce 3,000 tons of cement a day.

The president commissioning the Al-Mahdi Aluminium Complex, 19 kms from this provincial capital, said Monday night that Iran is to be turned into a powerful rival for other aluminium producing countries and can take part in international competitions.

Rafsanjani, whose term in office will end in August, said that each ton of aluminium is being produced in the world by leading companies at a cost of $7,000. However, in Iran it is being produced at $2,500, thanks to the efforts of domestic experts.

The president said that Iran will turn into an aluminium producing country through private investment in the sector.

Minister of Mines and Metals Mohammad Hussein Mahlouji said that with becoming operational of Al-Mahdi Complex, the annual production capacity of Iran will reach 450,000 tons.

Iran produced only 25,000 tons of aluminium in 1989, he said adding, with the skilled manpower, enormous energy resources and raw materials Iran will soon become an aluminium exporter.

The president later awarded plaques of honor to nine project directors and experts.

Being built at a cost of Rls 700 billion and $300 million, the complex will be one of the largest aluminium producing plants in the region with an annual output of 320,000 tons.

President Rafsanjani also commissioned the new loading and unloading installations at Rajaie Port here Monday night.

Built at a cost of $10 million and Rls 40 billion, the facility will increase the loading and unloading capacity of the port which is presently linked to 80 important ports in the world.

(IRNA)

(Contd From Pg. 2)

YUGOSLAV...

industrial projects in Iran.

He voiced Yugoslavia's readiness to cooperate with Iran in industrial, agricultural and energy sectors and called for setting up of a joint economic commission between Tehran and Belgrade.

Al-e Eshaq said trade volume between Iran and Yugoslavia was at a higher level in the past, but it has reduced at present.

He gave a proposal on holding meetings of the officials of chambers of commerce of the two countries.

He invited Yugoslavia to take part in Tehran's International Trade Fair in October and expressed Iran's readiness to expand trade with Belgrade in industrial and agriculture areas.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

ANTI-TALEBAN...

their former frontlines near the Parwan provincial capital Charikar 65 kilometers (40 miles) north of Kabul, by way of the Hindu Kush foothills to capture the base.

This is the second time in the past week that the 2nd division has changed hands, but until now the Taleban have failed to cross the Salang River into Jabul Siraj as Masood's men have blown-up the access bridge.

Abdullah said Masood fighters were still stationed on the south side of the bridge, in woodlands to the east of the 2nd division army base where fighting was still going on.

In neighboring Kapisa Province to the east of Parwan, Taleban-controlled Radio Shariat claimed military successes against Masood forces "in a clean-up operation" on Monday.

Abdullah admitted fighting in the vicinity of the Kapisa provincial capital Mahmud-e-Raqi, but denied any Taleban victory.

Analysts say if the Taleban can break through opposition advances in Kapisa Province they would be able to march on Gulbahar, the small town that sits at the mouth of the Panjshir Valley, Masood's native place and main military base.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg.7)

NEW...

veiled a potential new cancer vaccine, says that using an antibody to a protein that usually inhibits disease-fighting T-cells could allow the body to defend itself against cancer and other diseases more quickly and vigorously, the *Star Times* said.

The institute has so far only tested the protein antibody on mice, and it remains unclear when it could be available for human use.

Institute director of research Graham le Gos told the paper the results will be published in the international journal of *Experimental Medicine* later this month.

Le Gos left New Zealand last week on a six-week tour of Europe in the hope of attracting 1.5 million New Zealand dollars (one million U.S.) to fund the research programs.

Earlier this year the institute said it had discovered a treatment which involved modifying a type of blood cell, known as dentritic cells, to stimulate the immune system to fight tumors. Trials on patients should begin later this year, it was reported.

Another pioneering research team from Christchurch Hospital and Otago University in the South Island is close to developing a similar vaccine which will use the body's natural defense system to target and destroy cancer cells, *The Times* reported.

The method also works the dentritic cells — tiny components of white blood cells. These trigger the immune system to recognize cancer cells and attack their proteins.

The Christchurch group is working with a Melbourne team which is developing a breast cancer vaccine. Human trials are due to start later this year and are expected to generate huge worldwide interest, *The Times* said.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 12)

NIASAR...

can breathe easily. The cave enjoys natural air conditioning.

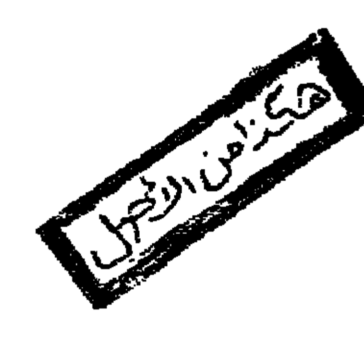
There are 45 wells, with a total depth of 188 meters. Twenty rooms have been constructed in an area of 176.5 sq.m. in the cave. The largest room in the cave covers 286 sq.m., while the smallest room covers 1.8 sq.m.

Archaeologists believe that the cave was built before the Niasar Fire Temple, and that the cave was used by military forces.

Due to erosion and infiltration of water through the cave's soil, its walls are covered with sediment; a widespread cleaning operation is currently underway in the cave.

Election F…

Stuff of S…



Election Race Stuff of Soaps

CARACAS— A former beauty queen leads in the polls. A failed coup leader has vowed to take power through the ballot box. And a disgraced former president has served notice that his political career is not finished.

With 18 months to presidential elections, the political scene has all the makings of one of Venezuela's celebrated soap operas. But the plethora of candidates and paucity of ideas could signal a sea-change in the country's political map as voters turn away from the two traditional parties that have dominated for five decades, analysts and politicians said.

"There's more talk about polls than about ideas," said Senator Eduardo Gomez Tamayo, a member of the ruling Convergence Party. "It's obvious that there has been a change in attitude. People are more demanding about what they expect," the former president of congress added.

The new popular mood has parties scurrying for candidates who can catch a jaded public's imagination. Social Democratic Action (AD) and Social Christian Copei are the dominant forces in Venezuelan politics but the level of disillusionment has forced even these parties to widen their nets for potential candidates.

"There's a frantic-ness, a sense of casting about," independent political consultant Erik Ekvall said.

Nowhere is the search more intense than in Copei, which has not won a presidential election since Luis Herrera Campins' triumph in 1978. At a recent soul-searching weekend, Copei top brass agreed an outsider could become its candidate.

"Copei's opening up is interesting, though it is an admission of its own weakness," said Claudio Fermin, AD presidential candidate in 1993 and a front-runner to lead that party in 1998.

Top of Copei's shopping list appears to be former Miss Universe Irene Saez, who dominates the pre-election debate. Saez, who is only 35, has become the candidate to beat. Overwhelmingly re-elected mayor of Caracas district Chacao in 1995, she tops opinion polls with 40 to 50 percent of popular support. Her closest rival gets only around 10 percent.

Saez makes little secret of her desire for the country's top job but has been careful not to make her bid official and to maintain her edge as an independent. "People are waiting for a political leader, a Messiah ... and I'm realising that people are pointing to me," she told Reuters recently.

Critics say the statuesque blonde has no concrete policies and limited experience. But analysts said a Saez candidacy, backed by Copei or by a range of other parties, is almost a certainty, if only as an outlet for popular discontent.

"If Irene didn't exist we would have to invent her," political analyst Anibal Romero said in a newspaper interview. "She personifies aspirations which don't have alternative channels. That's why she heads the polls."

Saez' name is not the only one to come out of the political outfield as a potential candidate. Luis Giusti, who has led an unprecedented opening of the state oil industry as president of Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) has been mentioned by Copei and union-based radical cause (CAUSA R) politicians.

In a country where ideological boundaries between parties are blurred, "you could see some very strange bedfellows," Ekvall said. Retired Lt. Col. Hugo Chavez, leader of a failed 1992 coup attempt, and Perez, who completed a 28-month sentence under house arrest last September, also plan to join the electoral fray, although most analysts see their impact as small.

But, despite the novelty of non-traditional politicians, voters are turning off in increasing numbers, convinced that none of the potential candidates has what it takes to lead the once-rich nation back to prosperity.

"They're all interested in one thing — themselves. Even Irene," housewife Maira Rivas said.

Voter apathy would play into the hands of AD as the only party with a machine capable of really delivering votes. AD candidates, backed by the most sophisticated party apparatus in the country, swept more than half the state governorships in 1995 local elections when turnout was less than 40 percent.

The Saez phenomenon is seen by many as a reaction to President Rafael Caldera. Although he broke with Copei to lead convergence to power in 1993, the 81-year-old leader is seen as the creator of the much-maligned political establishment.

South America's longest running democracy, Venezuela enjoyed relative political stability through a pact between Copei and AD to alternate power every five years. But the mould was broken with Carlos Andres Perez' second victory in 1988.

Tough economic reforms provoked bloody riots just weeks after Perez assumed power and two coup attempts in 1992. Confidence in the political system was rocked further when he was forced out of office in 1993, just eight months before completing his term, to face corruption charges.

Caldera, who has run for president in every election he has been eligible for since dictator Gen. Marcos Perez Jimerez was toppled in 1958, was elected on a ticket of honesty and social welfare. But his inability to cope with a massive financial sector crisis and perceived corruption in the public sector has seen his popularity plummet from more than 70 percent to less than 30 percent.

The failure of the grandfather of Venezuelan politics to restore confidence in the system could be the beginning of the end for the old parties.

"We're in the middle of something, between the death of one system and the birth of another," Ekvall said.

With the CAUSA R and movement to socialism (MAS) parties split internally, AD continues to hold most of the cards, particularly if voter disinterest continues, analysts said.

(Reuter)

Zionist Regime to Take Measures Against PA

ATHENS — The killing in the West Bank recently of three land dealers who were involved in selling Arab land to Jewish settlers has apparently overshadowed and could undermine Egyptian efforts to resume the stalled talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

On Monday, June 2, the Zionist regime reiterated earlier charges that the PA planned and executed the killing of the three Israeli agents, said a report from al-Qods dispatched to IRNA.

Following a discussion of the issue by Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu political and security aides, an Israeli official said "certain punitive measures (against the PA) have been decided."

The official, Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahlani, refused to spell out the nature of the measures taken, but said that Israel "could not ignore the murder of innocent people."

However, pundits in al-Qods believe Israeli sanctions against the PA might include restricting the movement of PA political and especially security officials outside the autonomous enclaves or area which is under exclusive PA control.

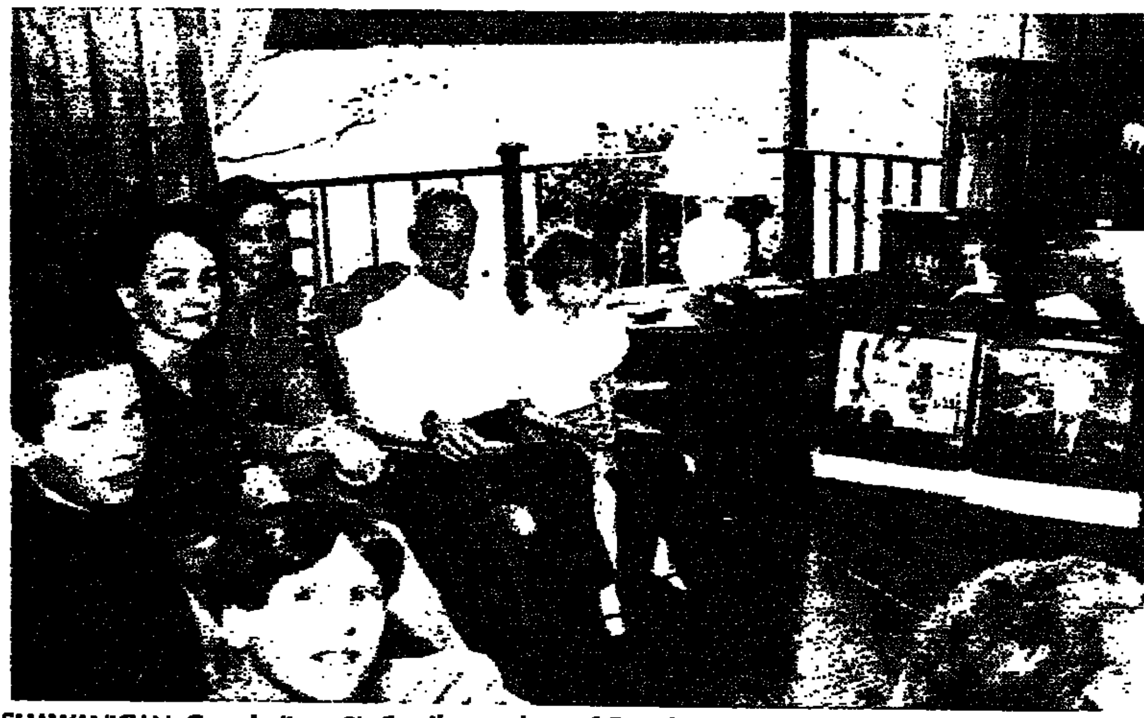
Moreover, Israel may well embark on imposing an intermittent or open-ended closure on Ramallah to which the three land dealers were abducted and where they were subsequently killed.

Israel actually took the draconian measure last year following the Palestinian mini-Intifada which erupted after the Netanyahu regime decided to open a subterranean tunnel beneath the al-Aksa Mosque in al-Quds.

Israel may also demand the extradition of Col. Tawfik al-Tirawi who is widely accused by Israeli intelligence officials of masterminding the killings.

Meanwhile, the Israeli general security services (the Shabak) contacted all "vulnerable land dealers" Sunday night, urging them "to be careful."

(IRNA)



SHAWANIGAN, Canada (June 2): Family members of Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien (C) are gathered at the Prime Minister's home of Shawanigan, Quebec, to follow Canadian election results on television. Canadians went to the polls to elect their 37th parliament. (From L-R): Olivier, Jacques, wife Aline Chretien, France, and Jean Chretien with his grand-daughter Jacqueline.

(AFP PHOTO)

Internal Polls Stir Upheaval in India Politics

NEW DELHI— Two internal political party polls have stirred upheaval within the groups which could spell trouble for India's seven-week-old government, analysts said.

But the crises within Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's party and its vital ally, Congress, were unlikely to threaten his government immediately because neither group was prepared to face fresh general elections, they said.

"I think both parties are going through a process of getting shaken up very badly because neither is used to the process of elections," said Mahesh Rangarajan, a political analyst at the Center for Contemporary Studies.

India's election commission recently announced it would recognize political parties only if they held democratic internal elections to choose new leaders by mid-June.

The announcement came as a rude shock to Congress, India's oldest political party, which has traditionally been steered by charismatic leaders and has held elections only three times over the past 112 years.

Analysts say Congress's 76-year-old President Sitaram Kesri is likely to win Monday's polls, sweeping aside opposition from two younger challengers, who say he is too old to rejuvenate the party that has been hobbled by a series of corruption scandals.

"Congress is an old party trying to restore itself. Kesri is one of the old war horses trying to stay on," B.G. Verghese of the Center for Policy Research told Reuters.

"Certainly, the elections will deliver some amount of shock therapy to the party," he said. The results of the Congress polls are expected on June 12.

The elections have also shaken Gujral's fractious Janata Dal, pitting its President Laloo Prasad Yadav against another leader, Sharad Yadav. The two are not related.

A Delhi court on Saturday postponed the Janata Dal's internal polls until June 16, saying some senior party appointments were fraught with illegalities.

Laloo, who is also chief minister of Bihar state, on Friday sacked four ministers who were prominent supporters of his rival. Two other ministers promptly resigned in solidarity.

"The Janata Dal is in a very serious crisis," Rangarajan said. "What we're seeing is an internal war of attrition, and I wouldn't rule out a split in the party. It is difficult to see how they will manage for another six months.

"Gujral has not been able to establish his authority. You can expect very turbulent waters for the government," he said.

Gujral has already been embarrassed by a federal police decision to prosecute Laloo, as the Indian press calls him, in connection with a $280 million scandal over fodder purchases.

Laloo says he is innocent and has resolutely refused to resign.

Verghese said turmoil would eventually subside. "No one in the Janata Dal sees any advantage in breaking the government, and I think they will all hang together," Verghese said. "At the end of the day, they'll all feel a bit foolish."

The Janata Dal is the largest party within Gujral's 15-party center-left united front government, which leans heavily on Congress support in parliament.

Congress, which has ruled India for all but five years since independence from British rule in 1947, toppled Gujral's predecessor by withdrawing its backing in March.

Rangarajan said Congress was unlikely to attempt a repeat. "I don't think it's in a resurgent phase," he added.

The party's infighting rose to the surface only after Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of Congress former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, decided not to join the race, Rangarajan said.

"I think a huge number of congressmen were looking around in absolute desperation to see if Sonia could help them," he said. "They're in a very confused state, and until the dust of the election settles, they really don't know what to do.

"Gujral has been very good at managing the equation with Congress," he added. "It's the problems within the Janata Dal that will be a real minefield."

(Reuter)

Gujral: India Wants Nepal's Development

KATMANDU — Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral assured the Nepalese business community Friday that India will remain a stable and longterm partner for Nepal's development.

The renewal of trade treaty between India and Nepal has given a boost to commercial relationship between our two countries, and will help increase Nepal's export to India, Gujral said, addressing members of the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

With the implementation of the trade treaty signed with New Delhi, Nepal's exports to India have gone up by 40.8 percent during the past nine months.

Nepal's exports to India was 4,210 million rupees ($76.5 million) during the period as against export of 2,990 million rupees ($54.4 million) during the corresponding period last year.

The conclusion of the Mahakali river treaty has opened up good prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation, the Indian premier said.

The Mahakali treaty include construction of multi-million-dollar pancheswor hydroelectric project, Tanakpur barrage and Sarada barage along the Mahakali river, bordering India and west Nepal.

"I hope the business communities of our two countries will seize the moment and establish stable relations which will lead to economic benefits for both countries," Gujral said.

Meanwhile, the visiting Indian prime minister was felicitated here Friday at a civic reception organized by the Katmandu municipality.

(AP)

Saddam Had His Impotency Cured -- and Invaded Kuwait

LONDON— Iraqi President Saddam Hussein suffered periods of impotence and virtual invalidity resulting from a back injury from the 1960s, a report said Sunday, and only invaded Kuwait after the condition was cured.

"We gave him back his cojones and he went into Kuwait," said a member of the Cuban medical team who treated him in Baghdad in 1980s and early 1990s, quoted by the *Sunday Times*.

"He could not function as a man," said another medical source who helped in the treatment. "In the Arab world this is a humiliation."

The paper said Saddam's problems started in the early 1960s when he jumped off a 15-foot (five-meter) wall to escape prison after being sentenced for a failed coup attempt. He suffered a compressed vertebra and damage to nerves in the spinal cord.

(AFP)

Italians Tried to Cash in on Mother's Corpse

ROME — Two Italians kept their mother's corpse at their home so they could continue to draw her pension, newspapers reported on Tuesday.

The pair, named only as Francesco, 43, and his sister Rosaria, 32, hoped no one would notice that their 76-year-old mother had died.

The body was discovered last Saturday when another son visited the home the two shared with the woman. He noticed the smell and called the police, La Stampa newspaper said. (Reuter)

Sighting of Mouse Holds Up Flight for 7 Hours

Bait-ul-Moqaddas — The Israeli Airline El Al, known for its tight security, delayed a flight from Tel Aviv to New York for seven hours to deal with an unwanted traveler.

During a flight Monday from New York to Israel, a passenger told the crew he had seen a mouse. When the plane reached Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv, it was grounded as a search for the rodent got under way. (AP)

S.Korean Red Cross Food Teams Head for N.Korea Border

BEIJING — Three South Korean Red Cross teams set off from Beijing Tuesday on the second leg of a mission to deliver 11,200 tons of corn to North Korea's starving people.

The nine officials left the Chinese capital as North Korean media reported predictions of a "bumper" rice harvest by leader Kim Hong Il.

The food teams left a day earlier than scheduled, after the North Korean Embassy speeded up their visa applications, a South Korean Embassy spokesman said.

They will be the first Southern officials to deliver South Korean food aid to the rival North since Pyongyang first appealed for international aid after floods in 1995. North Korea has admitted that children are dying from starvation.

Previous shipments had been handed over and monitored by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRCS).

Two of the Southern Red Cross teams flew to Shenyang, the capital of the northeastern Chinese province of Liaoning.

From Shenyang, they will split again and travel to the Sino-North Korean border towns of Sinuiju and Manpo. (AFP)

Sierra Leone Coup Leaders Said to Want $46 Million



FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (June 8): Major Johnny Koroma, leader of the coup in Sierra Leone, waves to the crowd in a stadium in Freetown where he was to make a "peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and thanksgiving address" to the Sierra Leonean people, two weeks after ousting elected President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in a coup.

(AFP PHOTO)

FREETOWN — Leaders of a coup in Sierra Leone are demanding $46 million to step down and allow the return of ousted civilian President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, sources close to the coup leaders said on Tuesday.

Sierra Leone's ambassador to the United Nations, James Jonah, said on Monday the coup leaders wanted money to give up power, but Director of Defense Information Colonel Abdul Sesay denied the allegation.

"There have been no negotiations concerning money," Sesay told Reuters.

Sesay said there had been no contacts since negotiations involving British and Nigerian diplomats and civilian politicians broke down on June 1, the eve of a Nigerian naval bombardment of Freetown.

He said the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council hoped to get the talks back on track to settle the crisis amicably.

"The coup leaders and their rebel allies are now demanding $46 million to step down to allow the return of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah," said one source.

He said the sum would be shared between a total of about 35 soldiers and rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) who have allied with the army since the May 25 coup. (Reuter)

Ten Killed in Pakistan Violence Surge

KARACHI, Pakistan — At least ten people, including two ethnic activists and two Sunni Muslim militants, were killed in a surge of violence in Pakistan overnight and on Tuesday, police said.

Gunmen attacked the headquarters of the breakaway Haqiqi faction of the ethnic Mohajir National Movement (MQM) in Karachi, killing two party workers, police said.

The gunmen were not identified.

Two activists of the Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) Sunni group were killed on Tuesday night at Saray Saddu, near Multan city in the central province of Punjab, police there said.

Haqiqi spokesman Younus Khan said the gunmen attacked the faction's main office in the eastern Landhi district and killed Kashif Qayum, 18, and Naveed Ahmed, 21.

HK Democrats Sue Over China-Selected Legislature

HONG KONG — Hong Kong's Democratic Party filed a court injunction on Tuesday to challenge the constitutional legality of Beijing's hand-picked shadow legislature set to replace a democratically-elected assembly upon the June 30 handover of the British colony.

Legal experts said the move, just 21 days before China takes over, had little chance of success but would cause intense embarrassment and may temporarily block the Beijing-selected chamber already forced to meet across the border in China.

Democratic Party legislator Albert Ho, who like fellow party members will be cast from office when the provisional legislature is installed, filed the writ in the high court on behalf of party co-founder Ng King-Luen, 74, the plaintiff.

"That organization unlawfully seized law-making power which belongs solely to the present legislative council," Ho told reporters.

Hong Kong's democracy lobby has campaigned actively at home and overseas against the chamber, endorsed by future leader Tung Chee-Hwa.

Britain and its Western allies have attacked the new assembly, questioning its legitimacy and plan to boycott any investiture ceremony.

In Washington, I.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who will be a guest at the handover ceremony, would not go to the swearing-in. (Reuter)

68 Bodies Exhumed From Mass Grave

ZAGREB — The Croatian authorities have exhumed 68 bodies from a mass grave in eastern Slavonia, the last Serb-held part of Croatia, a UN spokesman said Tuesday.

Spokesman Philip Arnold told AFP that digging, which began last week, had ended at the grave near Lovas, about 15 kilometers (nine miles) south of Vukovar, the main town of the region.

He said the bodies were reportedly of people who died between 10 and 19 October 1991, when rebel Serbs backed by Belgrade were fighting the Croatian forces in the region.

The bodies reportedly came from different locations and were brought together in one mass grave, he said.

Officials from the UN administration in eastern Slavonia, from the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague (ICTY) and local Serb representatives observed the digging. (AFP)

Manila Court Dashes Hopes for 2nd Ramos Term

MANILA — The Philippine Supreme Court on Tuesday dashed chances of a second term for President Fidel Ramos by upholding its ban on a petition to change the constitution so he could seek reelection.

The vote among the court members ended in a deadlock which meant their previous decision rejecting the petition stood, a court spokeswoman said.

The Supreme Court voted 6-6 with two abstentions and one vote discounted to maintain its decision in March disallowing a move by a citizens' group to initiate a referendum on lifting the term limits of the president and all incumbent officials.

The group has said it has collected almost five million signatures to force the calling of a referendum.

"(The challenge to the decision is) denied with finality, the arguments therein set forth not being of sufficient cogency to persuade the requisite majority of the court to modify or reverse the (original) decision," a court statement said. (Reuter)

Saddam's Son Uday Walks on Crutches

BAGHDAD — Iraq's newspapers published a picture on Tuesday showing President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday leaving hospital on crutches nearly six months after an assassination attempt.

In the picture, published in all Iraqi newspapers including Uday's *Babel*, he was accompanied by his younger brother Qusay and Iraqi doctors who treated him.

The official Iraqi news agency had said on Monday Uday left Ibn Sinaa Hospital in Baghdad after a "full recovery".

Uday was reported to have been seriously wounded by unidentified gunmen as he was driving on December 12 in Baghdad's wealthy district of Al-Mansour.

He underwent several operations, the last in April on his left leg. Uday, who said he was hit in both legs, said after the last operation he expected to be on his feet in a few days or weeks. (Reuter)

Sri Lanka Rebels in Huge Attack Against Troops

COLOMBO — Separatist Tamil rebels launched a pre-dawn assault on the military's defenses near the northern town of Vavuniya on Tuesday in a bid to cut off supplies to troops fighting further north, the Defense Ministry said.

It said more than 500 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels attacked the military's forward defense line at Thandikulam just north of the government-controlled frontline town of Vavuniya.

Vavuniya is 220 km (135 miles) north of Colombo.

A Defense Ministry statement said it was evident the LTTE were trying to dislodge the military's field headquarters and artillery positions at Thandikulam to disrupt an ongoing offensive against the rebels. (Reuter)

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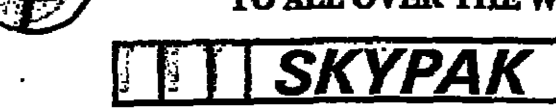
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